

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN EUR-25

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DRAFTED BY EUR/CAN:DAKRUSE

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PM/ISO:JDSTODDART

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

S E C R E T STATE 246086

E.O. 11652: ADS, DECLASSIFY AFTER RELEASE TO PRESS

TAGS : MARR, CA, US

SUBJECT : PROPOSED PRESS RELEASE ON U.S. AIR DEFENSE
DECISIONS

1. DOD IS PLANNING TO ISSUE A PRESS RELEASE CONCERNING
RECENT DECISIONS RELATING TO AIR DEFENSE OF CONTINENTAL
UNITED STATES. CANADIAN EMBASSY HAS BEEN GIVEN ADVANCE
COPY OF TEXT AND HAVE RELAYED IT TO OTTAWA FOR GOC CON-
CURRENCE. FOLLOWING TEXT IS FYI.

BEGIN TEXT: THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HAS CONDUCTED AN
EXTENSIVE STUDY OF THE DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES
AGAINST THE THREAT OF A MANNED BOMBER ATTACK--A PROCESS
WHICH HAS INCLUDED MORE THAN SIX MONTHS OF DISCUSSIONS
WITH CANADIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND, IN EARLY DECEMBER,
MY DISCUSSIONS WITH CANADA'S MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE,
JAMES A. RICHARDSON. I AM ANNOUNCING TODAY MY DECISION--
AS PART OF A CONTINUING REVIEW OF MILITARY BASES AND
OPERATIONS TO BRING ABOUT GREATER EFFICIENCY AND REDUCE
COSTS--TO REDUCE MISSILE AND INTERCEPTOR DEFENSE FOR THE
MANNED BOMBER ATTACK AGAINST THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES.

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WE WILL DIRECT OUR EFFORTS TOWARD OPERATIONS THAT PROVIDE LONG-RANGE WARNING OF A BOMBER ATTACK AND IMPROVE AIR

SPACE SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL. MOREOVER, WE WILL ENSURE THAT OUR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT KEEPS PACE WITH POTENTIAL AIRBORNE THREATS AND WILL CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN OUR TECHNOLOGICAL BASE IN ABM TECHNOLOGY. THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WILL ALSO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR FIELD ARMY AIR DEFENSE SYSTEMS AND CAPABILITIES.

SPECIFICALLY, I HAVE DIRECTED A MAJOR REDUCTION IN AIR DEFENSE INTERCEPTOR AIRCRAFT AND NIKE-HERCULES AIR DEFENSE SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE UNITS DEPLOYED FOR THE DEFENSE OF CONUS BOTH ACTIVE ARMY AND NATIONAL GUARD. THE PHASEOUT OF 48 NIKE-HERCULES BATTERIES--21 OF WHICH ARE OPERATED BY REGULAR ARMY UNITS AND 27 BY THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD--WILL BEGIN IN APRIL 1974 AND WILL BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF FY 1976. THE REMAINING NIKE-HERCULES UNITS IN FLORIDA WILL BE RETAINED FOR CONTINGENCY AND TRAINING MISSIONS. THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD TECHNICIANS ASSOCIATED WITH THE NIKE-HERCULES UNITS WILL BE RETAINED IN THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD STRUCTURE FOR USE IN OTHER PROGRAMS AND EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO PROVIDE POSITIONS FOR THESE TECHNICIANS.

THE AIR FORCE'S AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND WILL REPOSTURE ITS 26 INTERCEPTOR SQUADRONS TO RETAIN 18 UNITS, CONSISTING OF SIX ACTIVE F-106 SQUADRONS, SIX AIR NATIONAL GUARD F-106 SQUADRONS, AND SIX AIR NATIONAL GUARD F-101 SQUADRONS THROUGH FY 76. APPROXIMATELY 170 F-102 INTERCEPTORS FROM NINE CONUS ANG SQUADRONS WILL BE PHASED OUT OVER THE NEXT TWO AND ONE HALF YEARS. WE PLAN THAT IN AN EMERGENCY SOME OF OUR GENERAL PURPOSE FORCES WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR DEPLOYMENT FOR THE DEFENSE OF NORTH AMERICA AGAINST THE BOMBER THREAT. END TEXT.

2. WE UNDERSTAND FOREGOING TEXT REFLECTS COMMENTS FROM CAMERON (EXTAFF) AND KIRKWOOD (DEFENCE). SUBJECT POSSIBLE FURTHER MINOR REVISION, TEXT SCHEDULED FOR RELEASE DECEMBER 18. RUSH

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